

CIRCLE OF LIFE

Life cycle

of a

Kangaroo

Grow with me





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# Life cycle of a Kangaroo

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# Jumping jacks

If one had to decide on the cutest looking jumping champion, the title would surely go to the kangaroo. This animal simply cannot walk around, it can only jump! A kangaroo has strong hind legs, or back legs, and it uses these to jump around.

Let's find out More...

A kangaroo is a macropod. The term 'macropod' is derived from Greek and means 'one with a long foot'.





The kangaroo has a strong tail, which is used almost like an extra leg. When a kangaroo is born, it cannot jump at all. It can barely manage to crawl. So how does it become an awesome jumping jack when it grows up?



### TAKE CARE~

Human beings are using the land meant for kangaroos by building houses or using it as farmland.



*Hopping around is an easy way of travelling long distances for a kangaroo.*



# Fancy family

The kangaroo is a marsupial—an animal with a pouch for carrying the young ones. The mother kangaroo carries her little baby wherever it goes. The word 'kangaroo' comes from the aboriginal word 'gungurru' for the grey kangaroo. However, the English settlers in Australia pronounced it as kangaroo, and used the name for all types of kangaroos.

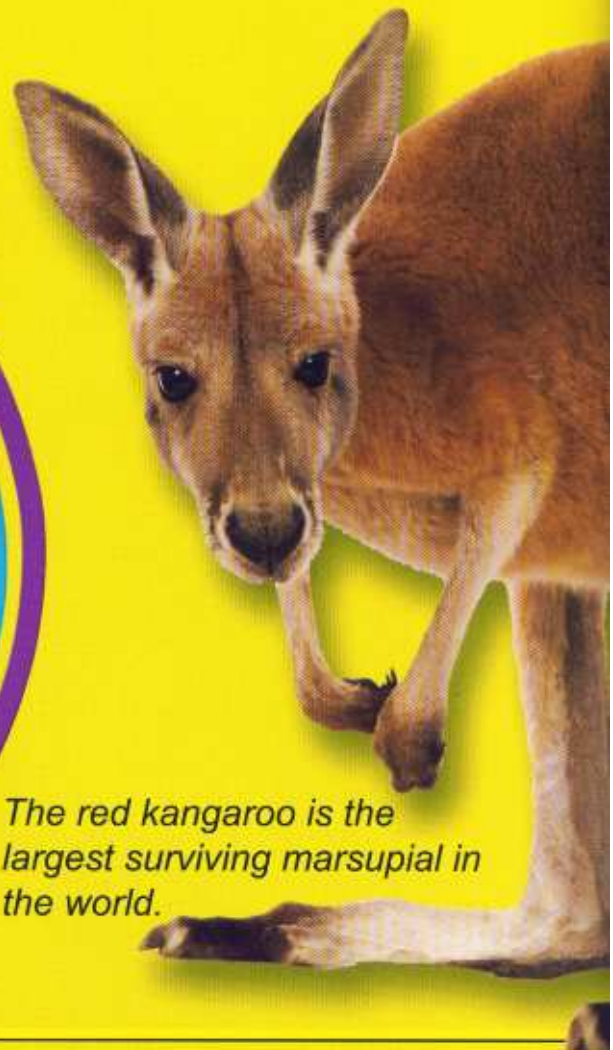


*The grey kangaroo is found in eastern Australia.*



## TAKE CARE -

Small kangaroos are hunted by cats, dingoes, and foxes, but the biggest danger to kangaroos is from hunting by humans.



*The red kangaroo is the largest surviving marsupial in the world.*





There are as many as sixty different types of kangaroos. The red kangaroo is the biggest kangaroo, followed by the grey kangaroo. Then come the wallaroos. The rat kangaroo and the wallabies are quite small in size.

*The soft, woolly fur of a wallaby may be grey, brown, red or almost black in colour.*



### Let's find out More...

You can tell a kangaroo by its nose! A grey kangaroo has a nose covered with hair except for a band around the nostrils. If you see a kangaroo that has a nose with a large bare patch around it, you've met the wallaroo.



# Growing up

Every living thing grows from a baby into an adult. As an adult, it will also produce its own babies. Like human beings, baby animals also carry the features of their parents. This way, the circle of life continues.

*A newborn kangaroo weighs less than two grams.*

## TAKE CARE ~

Some people kill kangaroos for meat or to make bags out of their skins.





Different creatures have different life cycles. Some start their life in the form of eggs while others as tiny babies. A baby kangaroo is called a joey. A joey usually cuddles up close to its mother in the pouch till it becomes strong enough to come out and jump on its own!

**Let's find out More...**

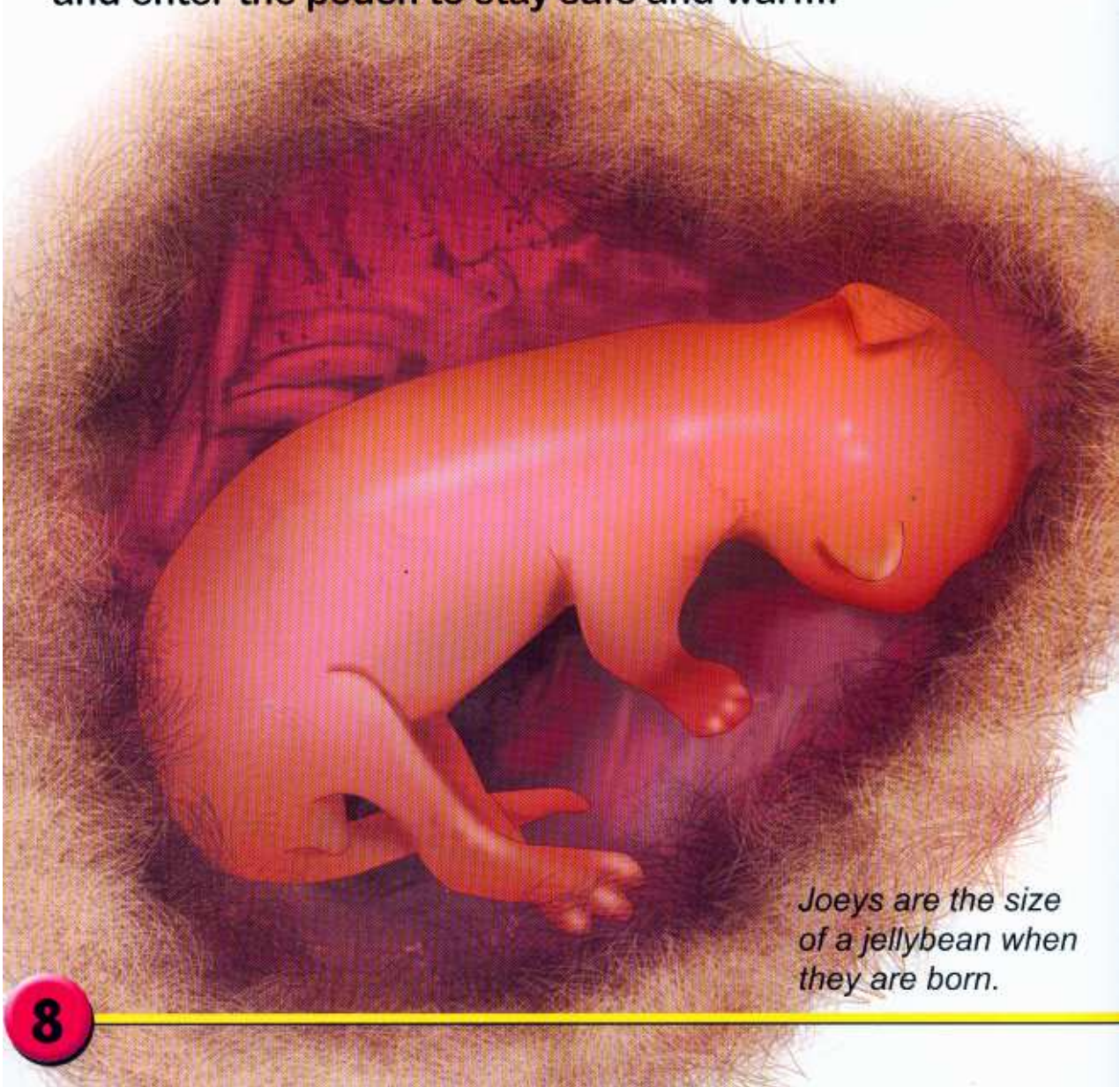
Kangaroos do not sweat. They lick their forearms, and let the evaporation cool their body!



# Marvellous ma!


A joey is tiny, pink, and hairless when it is born, and about two centimetres long. Not a bit like a champion jumper. It has tiny front legs and no signs of those strong back legs.

As soon as it is born, the joey uses its already clawed and well developed front legs to crawl up to its mother and enter the pouch to stay safe and warm!



*Joeys are the size of a jellybean when they are born.*





### Let's find out More...

Mother kangaroo  
licks a path on her  
fur to guide the  
baby to the pouch.  
The baby uses its  
front legs to claw its  
way in, all by itself!



In the pouch, the  
joey feeds on its  
mother's milk. This  
milk has lots of fat to  
give the baby extra  
energy. The milk also  
changes according  
to the baby's needs  
until it does not  
require milk at all.



### TAKE CARE

Sometimes, the joey  
may fall on its way to  
the pouch. If it does, it  
faces danger from other  
wild animals.



## Peek-a-boo!

Once the little joey has grown bigger, it grows some hair. Its legs also develop with the rest of its body. It now looks more and more like a kangaroo. As its jaws shape up, it sometimes leaves the milk that its mother is feeding it, and peeps at the world outside the pouch.

*A female kangaroo can contract her muscles to control the size of her pouch and its opening.*





At nine months, the joey starts leaving the pouch but not for long spells. It always returns. It is still small, and finds it very comfortable being close to its mother.



## TAKE CARE

Kangaroos do not have babies if there is a drought, as there is little to eat at such times.



## Let's find out More...

If you were a boy kangaroo, you'd be called a buck, a boomer or an old man. If you were a girl kangaroo, you would be called a doe, a jill or a flyer.



# Exploration expert

Once the joey is able to climb out of the pouch, it starts spending more time outside. But it still returns to its mother for a quick drink of milk. This continues for almost a year. But the mother finds that the little one has become too heavy to be carried, and can very well manage on its own. So though the baby gets the milk now and then, it has to jump alongside and play!

*Kangaroos are herbivores, and eat grasses, leaves, and shoots of small trees.*

Let's find out More...

Bucks love a game of 'boxing'. Punching with the front legs is quite harmless. But a punch from the kangaroo's hind legs can be very dangerous!





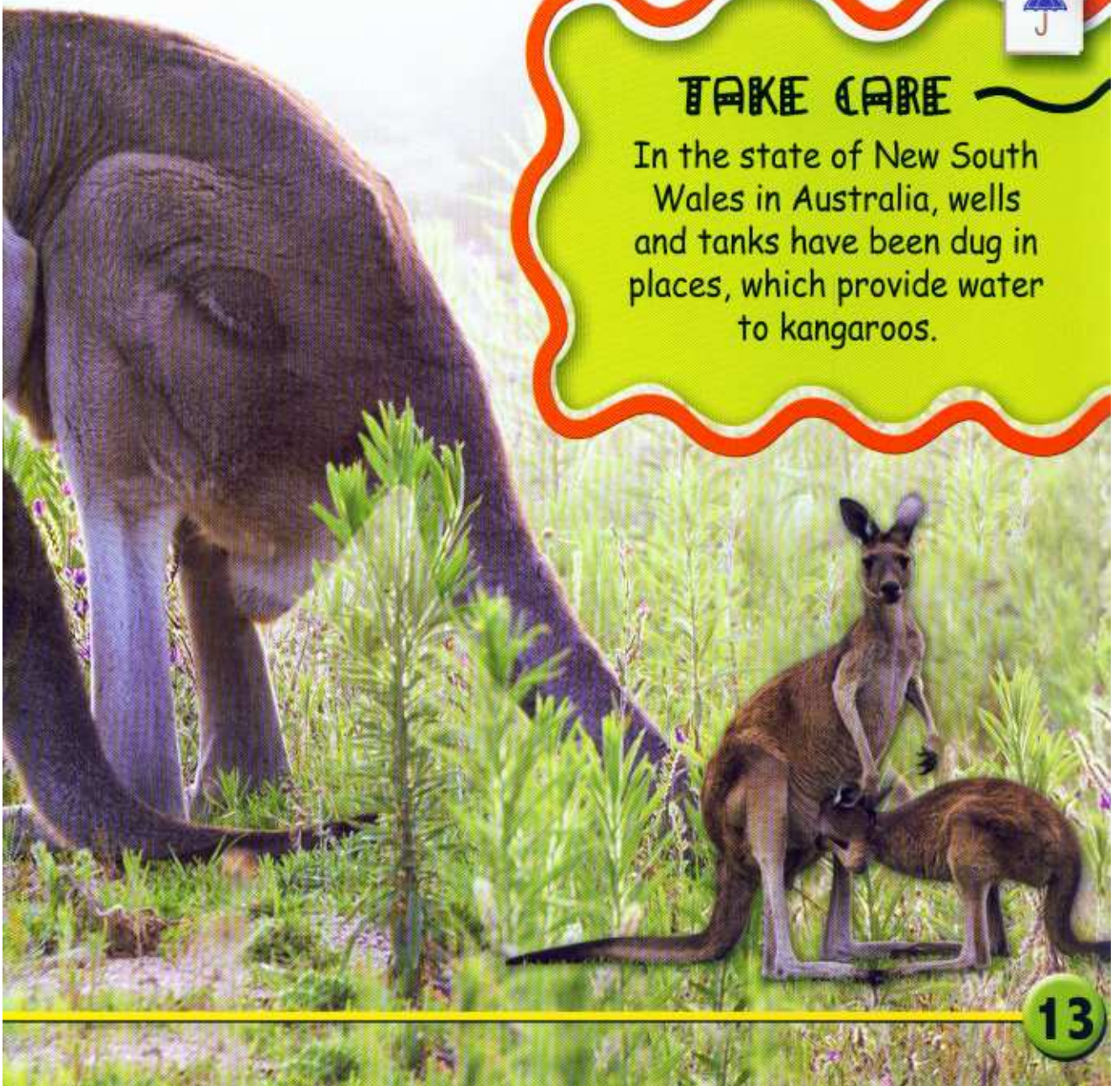


Though kangaroos usually have a single baby in a year, mothers may be taking care of three babies at a time. One that is growing and just out of the pouch, the second growing in the pouch, and the third one in the womb.



## TAKE CARE

In the state of New South Wales in Australia, wells and tanks have been dug in places, which provide water to kangaroos.





# Merry mob

Most kangaroos live in groups called mobs. A mob consists of at least two or three kangaroos, but it can have up to a hundred of them. Though kangaroos are very social animals, some of them prefer to stay alone.



## TAKE CARE ~

Herbivores like sheep, cattle, and rabbits compete with kangaroos for scarce food, especially during drought.





If a mob of kangaroos is attacked, each one of them will run in a different direction. Kangaroos travel in groups of about ten males and ten females. The leader of the mob is a male kangaroo called a 'boomer'. The boomer is not just the oldest but also the largest in size.

*A mob of kangaroos is also called a troop or herd.*



**Let's find out More...**

A kangaroo cannot move backwards at all! If it did, it would topple over. Hence, it was chosen as the Australian coat of arms to show that the country is always moving ahead!



# Cousins all

Meet some other cousins of the kangaroo family!

## THE TREE KANGAROO

1. These kangaroos spend most of their time on trees.
2. Their hind and front legs are of the same length.
3. They stay in small groups—often just the mother, the father, and the little joey!



## THE WALLABY

1. A wallaby is a small kangaroo.
2. Nailtail wallabies have a nail-like tip on their tails. Rock wallabies can balance themselves very well on rocks.

## THE WALLAROO

1. A wallaroo is halfway between a wallaby and a kangaroo in size!
2. It has a large black rump.
3. It likes to live alone.





THIS IS A  
GREEN  
BOOK



# Life cycle of a Kangaroo

How does a bunch of tiny eggs change into a beautiful butterfly? What happens to a tadpole's tail when it grows into a frog? How does a baby whale drink its mother's milk to grow big and strong? Who looks after the elephant calf? When does a joey leave its mother's pouch? There's a lot of love, care, and magic in nature's circle of life. Read on...

## Other titles in this series:

- Life cycle of a Butterfly
- Life cycle of an Elephant
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